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R 232000Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6471

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 4844

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINS, AR, BL, CI, PA, UY, BR
SUBJECT: SOUTH AMERICAC SOUTHERN CONE SECURITY PRACTICES

REF: STATE 178852

(NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS/NOT RELEASABLE TO CONTRACTORS OR CONTRACTOR-CONSULTANTS/WARNING NOTICE--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED)

1. EMBASSY BUENOS AIRES OFFERS FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON INR REPORT NO. 526 OF JULY 19, 1976, AS TRANSMITTED IN REFTEL:

2. FIRST, WE AGREE WITH INR ASSESSMENT THAT PRESENT EVIDENCE DOES NOT RPT NOT CONFIRM THAT SOUTHERN CONE SECURITY FORCES ARE INVOLVED IN WELL-ORGANIZED CONSPIRACY TO ELIMINATE EXILE LEADERS. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE MOTIVATION AND OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO, AND IT WOULD BE EQUALLYS ERRONEOUS TO CONCLUDE THAT SUCH CONSPIRACY IS UNLIKELY.

3. HOWEVER, INR ASSESSMENT UNDERESTIMATES DEGREE OF COOPERATION BETWEEN REGIONAL SECURITY FORCES, IN OUR OPINION. REPORT RECOGNIZES THAT REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE ORGANIZED TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND TO COOPERATE IN CERTAIN AREAS (OPERATON CONDOR"). IT DOES NOT APPEAR TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION RECENT REPORTS OF THE PRESENCE IN ARGENTINA OF SECURITY FORCES PERSONNEL FROM URUGUAY AND CHILE, FOR EXAMPLE,

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WHO APPEAR TO BE ACTING AS ADVISORS TO THE ARGENTINE FORCES IN CONNECTION WITH NATIONALS OF THEIR OWN COUNTRIES SUPPOSED TO BE INVOLVED IN SUBVERSION. ONE RECENT REPORT CITED ARGENTINE ARMY SOURCE REFERENCE TO A URUGUAYAN ARMY MAJOR ASSIGNED TO THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE "WHO HAS BEEN IN BUENOS AIRES FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS COOPERATING WITH ARGENTINE SECURITY FORCES IN ANTI-TERRORIST OPERATIONS." ANOTHER REPORT [redacted] 3.3(b)(1)
CITED PRESENCE IN BUENOS AIRES OF URGUAYAN DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE PERSONNEL WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH ARGENTINE SECURITY SERVICE. INR SHOULD ALSO NOTE [redacted]
WHICH MAKES CLEAR THE EXTENSIVE INTERCHANGE OF PERSONNEL AND ACTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN CHILE AND ARGENTINA ON SECURITY MATTERS. WE 3.3(b)(1)
CONSIDER THAT THE EVIDENCE IS HEAVILY WEIGHTED IN FAVOR OF THE CONCLUSION THAT BOTH CHILEAN AND URUGUAYAN SECURITY PERSONNEL ARE JOINING IN OPERATIONS OF THE ARGENTINE SECURITY FORCES AGAINST TERRORISTS AND SUBVERSIVES, BOTH IN BUENMOS AIRES AND OTHER PARTS OF ARGENTINA, ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT DOCUMENT THE CONDLUSION. IT IS PROBABLY THAT ARGENTINE SEUCIRYT PERSONNEL' IN TURN HAVE TRAVELED TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO COOPERATE WITH LOCAL SECURITY FORCES. WITHOUT QUESTION, REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE RECOGNIZED AND RESPONDED IN KIND TO "INTERNALIZATION" OF TERRORIST/SUBVERSIVE EFFORT, REPRESENTED IN SOUTHERN CONE BY THE JCR.

4. IN ADDITION, THERE APPEARS ALSO TO BE MISUNDERSTANDING, TO WHICH WE MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED, AS TO COMPOSITION OF THE VARIOUS FORCES ENGAGED IN BATTLE IN ARGENTINA. IN PARA 4 OF REFTLE, INR REFERS TO "...TRI-CORNERED BATTLE AMONG SECURITY PERSONNEL, LEFTISTS AND RIGHT-WING ASSASSINS." THIS DESCRIPTION IMPLIES THAT THERE ARE RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS OPERATING COMPLETELY INDEPENDENTLY IN ARGENTINA. DURING PERIOD OF TRIPLE A UNDER LAST PERONIST GOVT THIS WAS TRUE AS RIGHT-WING LABOR GOONS WERE PROBABLY AS ACTIVE AS OFF-DUTY SECURITY PERSONNEL IN MURDERING AND HARASSING LEFTISTS. IN OUR BEST JUDGMENT, THE ONLY "RIGHT-WING ASSASSINS" OPERATING IN ARGENTINA AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, ARE MEMBERS OF THE GOA SECURITY FORCES. THE BATTLE IS A TWO-SIDED AFFAIR, NOT TRI-CORNERED. ONLY REAL QUESTION IS DEGREE TO WHICH SECURITY FORCES PERSONNEL MAY BE OPERATING OUT OF GOA CONTROL.
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